

## Biblical Holy War

The concept of holy war.

Look in the book of Joshua chapter 4 and verse 13. We will come back to this verse before I finish today. Look in Joshua chapter 4 verse 13. The Bible says, "About 40,000 prepared for war passed over before the Lord unto battle to the plains of Jericho."

Now note that again. About 40,000 prepared for war passed over before the Lord unto battle to the plains of Jericho. Humanism had basically captured the minds of modern-day Christians. And the fact is, that we do not think scripturally or biblically anymore. And the very fact that when biblical truth is taught it seems so strange to our ears we think that that possibly cannot be right. It possibly cannot possibly be true. But the truth is we have been humanized and we need to be Christianized and understand that there is a biblical concept of the fact that God is a warrior.

Now, let me just very quickly give you this. I gave you five truths of a breakdown of the theme of God is a warrior from the Bible. I'm not going to give you all the scriptures right now, but I'm going to repeat these five truths.

First of all, in the Old Testament, God appeared as a warrior who fought against Israel's flesh and blood enemies. I don't have to read the scripture for that. You know how God fought against Egypt. How He fought against the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites. So first of all, God fights against Israel's flesh and blood enemies.

Secondly, when Israel sinned and rebelled against God, God appeared as a warrior and fought against Israel. And I showed you that in the Scripture as well.

And then thirdly, the Old Testament ended, or it begins, I should say, with the prophets looking forward to the future and proclaiming the advent of a powerful divine warrior.

And then fourthly, Christ comes in the New Testament as a divine warrior to deliver his people from sin, death, and from their lesser enemies as well as we read in Luke chapter 1.

And then fifthly, Christ is going to return a second time as the divine warrior who will destroy all of his human and spiritual enemies. And then I went through the Bible and showed you that truth. And of course, I also pointed out how one of the main titles of God in Scripture is the Lord of Hosts, which indicates that God is the God of the armies. In fact, we find that stated over and over in the Bible.

So, this is just simply the concept of God as a warrior. Now today we're going to come to the concept of holy war. Now probably everyone in this room has heard of what is known as the Islamic Jihad. Who can tell me what that is? What is the Islamic Jihad? It is the holy war of Islam. Jihad refers to holy war. In other words, this term refers then to the Muslims as they fight against the great Satan. And in their concept of holy war, they're fighting against the great Satan, which usually refers to America in general, and Christians in particular.

Now, it may surprise you to know that the Muslims refer to the Christians as infidels. We're unbelievers. We're infidels because we do not believe in Allah. So, their concept then is that they have a holy war that they're fighting against the infidels. Now their concept of a holy war while it is misapplied is nonetheless a biblical concept. And I find it extremely interesting that it is those people who live in the Middle East that have still retained the idea of a holy war while that idea is totally foreign to us who live in the West.

Now, when I mention the concept of holy war, most people will stand aghast at that idea and they think, "How in the world can war be holy? I mean, how can anything so destructive, so devastating, and so deadly as war be classified as holy in any way whatsoever. Now it is true that the term "holy war" does not appear in the Bible, but the concept of holy war does appear over and over in Scripture.

Now I want you to turn in your Bibles, if you would please, to the book of Numbers, chapter 21 and verse 14. I read this passage last week, but let me give it to you in a different light this week. Numbers chapter 21 and verse 14. Note what the scripture says. "Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the Lord, what he did in the Red Sea and in the brooks of Arnon." Now note carefully, "Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the Lord, what he did.

Would any be so bold and so blasphemous to declare that the wars of the Lord were not holy wars. You see God fought because God is a warrior and whatever God does very obviously is holy and right. So, here's a verse that tells us that all of these wars that God engaged in and had his people engage in they were classified and called the wars of the Lord. So very obviously they must be holy if they were his wars.

Look in your Bibles if you would please to the book of Deuteronomy chapter 4 and verse 34 Deuteronomy 4 verse 34. I pointed out last week how God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt and the means that he used to deliver them. Look at it in Deuteronomy chapter 4 and verse 34. The Bible says or have God a say to go and take in a nation from the middle of another nation by temptations by signs by wonders and by war and by mighty hand by stretched out arm and by great terrors according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes so the very fact that God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt by an act of war means undoubtedly was a holy war for it was God who was doing the fighting and It was God who was doing the delivery.

Do you not remember? It was God who passed over and smoked the firstborn. It was God who destroyed Pharaoh and his armies in the Red Sea. So, the Bible says that God then delivered the children of Israel by an act of war. So very obviously God's wars must be right.

Now if something is right, that means it is righteous. Therefore, if something is righteous, is holy. So, we have then the concept of holy war, for God himself has engaged in it.

Look in your Bibles, if you would please, to the book of Revelation chapter 19 and verse 11. Now for those individuals who say, "Well, war cannot possibly be holy in any way," well, look in this passage. The Bible says in the book of Revelation chapter 19 and verse 11, watch carefully, John writes Now I saw heaven opened,

and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

Does he judge and want? Make war now Jesus Christ makes war if Jesus Christ is a divine warrior and if Jesus Christ is the righteous one, that means the war that he wages is a righteous war. And if it is righteous, then it is holy.

So very obviously, not only does God the Father wage holy war, but God the Son wages holy war as well. So, there is the concept of holy war.

Now I want you to turn back in your Bibles to the book of Ephesians chapter 6. And let's read a very familiar passage, Ephesians chapter 6, and let's begin reading there with verse 10. Look what the Apostle Paul writes, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore having your loins girded out with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation with the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

Now I want you to know that the Apostle Paul is talking about putting on the whole armor of God. He's talking about a warfare and this warfare is holy, this warfare is righteous. Now, inevitably, invariably, someone is going to object and say, "But Brother Weaver, this passage is talking about spiritual warfare." I concur with that and I will certainly admit that, but let me tell you something. Do you realize that all warfare whether it is physical or whether it is classified as merely spiritual; all warfare is spiritual in reality.

Let me give you an illustration. I was thinking coming down here. Do you realize I could stand up and say well the trouble in our country is we have an ungodly unbiblical unconstitutional money system and we do. Let me tell you something. The funny money, the monopoly money that's floating around as money is not money. It is fiat money. There is no backing by production, by good and by services. It's a debt, that is how money comes into circulation, which is unbiblical. Because we have forsaken God. The reason we have a Federal Reserve Board Act. And the reason we have fractional reserve banking system is because we've forsaken God and forsaken His Word, and here we have the enemy waging war upon us physically, but it is a spiritual principle that is behind it. You understand that?

Now, you could take whatever you want to. Look at the public education as such. You follow what I'm saying? If you will go back, you will find out that it was originally started by men and I'm giving you one of the quotes and here's what he said, "We must unravel the tentacles of Satan from around our children." And the tentacles of Satan he was referring to as biblical Christianity. He wanted to undo biblical Christianity.

By the way, I must admit he's been quite successful and his successors have done that. They have unraveled the tentacles of biblical Christianity from around the children of America. But I'm showing you, although there are physical acts behind all of those physical acts is a spiritual principle. But you say, "Brother Weaver, Ephesians chapter 6 verses 10 through 18 deals with spiritual warfare. Let me ask you a question. Is war holy only when it is spiritual?" I want you to think about that for a moment. If the concept of war is wrong in and of itself, if the concept of war is inherently sinful, then in that case it would be wrong whether you engage in it either physically or spiritually.

Now, let me give you an illustration. Is the physical act of adultery wrong? Sure, it is. Sure, it is. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Everybody knows that. Well let me ask you another question. Is the mental and the spiritual act of adultery wrong? Oh, why? Because adultery is wrong in and of itself, whether it's physical or whether it's spiritual.

Now you see, if war was inherently wrong in and of itself, it would be wrong spiritually just like it would be physically. So very obviously you cannot say that spiritual war alone is holy. No, no. War has to be holy because it is holy spiritually and it would be holy physically when it is fought for the right reasons, which I'll explain later on.

Now, someone says, "But Brother Weaver, you don't understand. In spiritual war nobody gets hurt." Oh? Well, let me put it like this. Number one, you get hurt. if you don't engage in it. And number two, let me point this out, war, whether it is physical or spiritual, has as its goal the infliction of damage or destruction upon one's enemies. And I hope that when you fight spiritually you are inflicting at least some damage upon Satan and his minions. You see what I'm saying? Very obviously someone does get hurt. Even in spiritual warfare now, it's impossible to have a war without casualties That's physically and spiritually true as well. Because the goal in warfare is to damage your enemy now.

Let me just try to show you how there is a concept of holy war and how that concept is a legitimate and lawful and biblical concept. If I were to ask you this morning, how many of you believe in the death penalty for murderers, I'm sure that every one of you would raise his hand. You believe that the murderer should be put to death.

Now, let me show you what the Scripture teaches on that. Look in your Bibles, first of all, to the book of Numbers, chapter 35, and let's read verse 31. Numbers 35, verse 31. I want to try to get to you mentally today and show you the concept of holy war. Numbers chapter 35 verse 31, look what God says. "Moreover, you shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, but he shall be surely put to death."

Now God says here's a murderer, he's been found guilty. He's been proven guilty. God says you're to take no satisfaction. You're to put him to death. Now, what if a murderer happened to be a multi-millionaire? Say a billionaire. And he came up and offered every member of the jury a million bucks each to acquit him and offered the judge five million. And they agreed. Would that be right? No. God says you're to take no satisfaction. He's to be put to death. Would it be right to give him 20 years in prison? No. He's to be put to death.

Now, look in your Bibles to the book of Deuteronomy chapter 19, and let's begin there with verse 11. Deuteronomy 19 verses 11 through 13. Deuteronomy 19 verse 11. God says, "But if any man hate his neighbor, and lie in wait for him and rise up against him and smite him mortally that he die and flee unto one of these cities that is the city of refuge, then the elders of his city shall sit and fetch him fits and deliver him into the hand of the avenger blood that he may die. Watch! Thine eye shall not pity him but thou shalt put away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel that it may go well with thee.

Now here's a man that has premeditatedly murdered someone he hated the man that he murdered. So he murdered him and he flees to the city of refuge. And he thinks, "Well, I'm going to be protected there." God says, when that man flees to the city of refuge, God says, "Your eye is not to have pity upon him. You're to take that man, hand him over to the avenger of blood, and watch that avenger put him to death."

By the way, I hope you understand there are some people in the Bible that God forbids you to have pity upon. A murderer is one of them. Another group is if he will not work neither should he eat. You see what I'm saying? I can be very sympathetic with Ed, if Ed is sick and cannot work I'm willing to help him. But if Ed is too lazy to work let him starve. I mean you know that that would correct the situation one way or the other.

But there are certain people and certain groups that God forbids us to have pity upon and a murderer is one of them. God said we're to take no satisfaction, we're to put him to death. Now, if you will turn very quickly in your Bibles to the book of Romans chapter 13 and look at verse 4. Talking about the civil magistrate, and I will just put Civil government here; look what God says for he that is the civil magistrate is the minister of God to thee for good. But if I'll do that which is evil be afraid for he does not bear the sword in vain. for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

For he's the minister of God a revenger to execute wrath upon him that do the evil now two things about this verse. First of all, twice in this verse the civil magistrate is called the minister of God each time the word minister appears it is the word deacon in the Greek and it is where we get our English word "deacon," which literally means "servant."

So, the civil magistrate is to be the servant of God. In what area is he to serve God? Well, look at it. He said in verse 4, "For he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Now, the word "revenge" is "ek" in the Greek. Dikai is the word righteousness and ek is a preposition which means out of so the revenge is one that exacts righteousness or draws righteousness out of what is right for a murderer? It is righteous to put him to death and so God says the civil magistrate is to be the man that exacts God's righteousness and puts the murderer to death.

Now I want you to understand that capital punishment is based upon the fact that man was made in the image of God. When a man maliciously murders someone else, it is not just an attack upon another man. It is not just simply the taking of another man's life. It is basically an attack upon God himself and the image of God.

Now, flip back in your Bibles to the book of Genesis chapter 9 and look at verse 6. Genesis 9, look at what God says, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Why? "For in the image of God made he man." So why does God demand the death penalty? Because when you murder someone, you're not just murdering a man, you are attacking God by attacking God's image in that man. And so God says it merits the death penalty.

Now let me ask you a question. Does the Bible teach the death penalty? The answer is yes. Now let me ask you another question. Is it righteous to put a murderer to death? Is it holy to put a murderer to death? Okay now We've established a principle The murderer is to be put to death and it's righteous and it's holy.

Let me ask you a question. Let's suppose five men ganged up on one man and all five men participated in beating the man to death. How many of them deserve to die? All five. Because each one is guilty of murder. Although only one man may have struck the fatal blow. You understand? Now, let's go further.

What if 20 men ganged up on two men and beat them to death, how many deserve to die? All 20. If 100 ganged up on 30 men and beat them to death, how many deserve to die? 100.

Now, you see, once the principle of justice is embraced, once you understand the death penalty reaches the murderer it makes no difference for the murderer is one or many. By extension the same principle can be extended to an army or a nation if it's a right to put a single murderer to death, it is also right to put an army of murderers to death. It is also right to put a nation of murderers to death. Because here you have the principle.

Now watch this. It is the principle of holy war that led to national destruction in the Bible. You say, what are you talking about? Well, since you're in Genesis, turn right over to the book of Genesis, chapter 15. In this passage, God is telling Abraham that his descendants are going to be a stranger in a strange land for 400 years. So let's begin reading Genesis 15 verse 13 and he said unto Abram nor the surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs and shall serve them and they shall afflict them for hundred years And also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge and afterwards they shall come out with great substance and thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace now shalt be buried in a good old age now. Let's stop there just for a moment.

So God says now Abraham I want you to understand something your descendants are going to go down into a strange land for 400 years and those people are going to persecute and afflict your descendants, but Abraham you are going to die in a good old age. Don't worry about it, you're not going to be involved in that. We're going to take care of you. Now God says, "When I do bring out your descendants, they're not going to come out empty handed. They'll come out full."

Now I've got a question to ask you. Why did Israel have to spend 400 years in the land of Egypt? That's true God decreed it, but why did God decree it?

Look at the next verse and you'll find out the real reason. Because, he said, "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again." What? "For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." So God let the wicked Amorites have 400 more

years of filling up their belly with sin and wickedness and rebellion. And then when Israel was brought out of Egypt by an act of God, by an act of war, God put a sword in the hand of the children of Israel and said, "Kill everyone of them."

Now why were the Amorites to be killed? Because they were a nation of murderers and a nation of wicked ungodly people. Here's a concept of holy war, by the way. It's this concept of holy war that led to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. And by the way, you know, we talk about this, we talk about Sodom and Gomorrah. Have you ever read about Zebulun and Admah?

I've never heard about Zebulun and Admah. Well, I want you to note something. It was not just Sodom and Gomorrah that were overthrown. It was also the cities of the plain and Zebulun and Admah happened to be two of those cities. I don't know how many cities were overthrown, but a lot of them were consumed. It's the concept of holy war.

I think I told you this, don't know whether I did or not, but if you would get Black's Law Dictionary, fourth edition, fourth edition, and look up the definition of burying alive. Guess what you will find? The punishment for Sodomites in England and for those who make covenants with the Jews. So if you were a Sodomite in England, they buried you alive. Why? Well, God says he that lies with man kind as with woman kind, shall surely be put to death." In other words, it's right to put a Sodomite to death, biblically, scripturally, and the state should be doing exactly that.

It was a righteous and holy war that God waged against Sodom and Gomorrah. It was a righteous and holy war that led to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Because God was warring against those murderers and those rebels. Now, the rebellious individuals.

Now, it's the same principle that's going to be enforced upon Judgment Day. It's going to be a holy Christ who wages a holy war against his enemies. I want you to understand something. Think this through. The concept of holy war has Christological implications. That is, it refers to Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ comes back and the Bible says, "In righteousness he doth make war."

Do you not remember what the Apostle Paul wrote those Thessalonians in 2 Thessalonians chapter 1 beginning with verse 7? He said, "And you who are troubled rest with us. When our Lord Jesus shall return in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who know not God and obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ."

That is a righteous and a holy war. So warfare in the Bible is a divine activity. I'll explain that more next week. Now God Israel's sovereign Lord and as Israel's sovereign Lord he promised to protect Israel from all of their enemies. I want you to understand that there is a covenantal connection or a covenantal aspect to warfare. We'll see this more thoroughly next week. But I want you to turn in your Bibles if you would to the book of Leviticus chapter 26. Let me just point to you, point this out, the covenantal aspect of warfare. "God says, 'You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary. I am the Lord. If you walk in My statutes and keep my commandments and do them. Now watch, this is the covenant. If you walk in my statutes and keep my commandments and do them, then I will give you rain in due season and the land shall yield her increase and the trees of

the field shall yield their fruit and your threshing shall reach into the vintage and your vintage shall reach into the sowing time and you shall eat your bread to the full and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land.

Now watch and you shall lie down and none shall make afraid, and I will rid evil beasts out of the land. Neither shall the sword go through your land." Now you see this? Here is God as Israel's sovereign Lord protecting her from her enemies. Note verse 7, "And you shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. And five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight. and your enemy shall fall before you by the sword. For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish, My covenant with you."

Now, look in verse 14 of the same chapter. "But if you will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments, and if you shall despise my statutes, Or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that you will not do all my commandments, but that you break my covenant, I will also do this unto you. I will leave it a point over you terror, consumption, and the burning egg you, and shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart, and you shall sow your seed in vain, and your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and you shall be slain before your enemies. They that hate you shall reign over you and you shall flee when none pursue with you And if you will not yet for all this hearken to me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

Now skip down to verse 25, "and I will bring a sword upon you that shall venge the quarrel of what? The quarrel of my covenant and when you are gathered together within your cities I will send the pestilence among you and you shall be delivered into the hand of Your enemy."

There's a covenantal aspect to warfare God is saying if we obey him then he is going to protect us and our enemies will be defeated before us. But if we disobey God He is not going to protect us and our enemies are going to have the upper hand now.

I want you to turn in your Bible to the book of Deuteronomy chapter 28. Let me show it to you again in black and white. Let's begin reading there with verse 1. Deuteronomy 28 is one of the most important passages in the Bible. It has the blessings and the curses. Everybody knows that presidents take their oath of office with their hand placed upon a Bible. Today it doesn't mean very much. But did you know originally, initially, when presidents had their hand upon their Bible, the Bible was opened to Deuteronomy 28. Because they realized the blessings and the curses of God. And so they took their oath as unto God Based upon Deuteronomy 28 now let's look in verse 1. And it shall come to pass that thou shalt harken diligently unto the voice of the Lord by God to observe and do all his commandments Which I command thee this day that the Lord by God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth and all these blessings shall come upon thee and overtake thee if thou shalt harken in the voice of the Lord by God now watch all these blessings are going to come upon you they're going to overtake you and If you only obey God.

Now what are they? Verse 3. "Blessed shall thou be in the city and blessed shall thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, the fruit of thy ground, the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kind, the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed



shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shall thou be when thou comest in, when thou shalt be when thou goest out. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face." They shall come out against thee one way and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in the storehouses and all that thou setest thine hand unto and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. The Lord shall stablish thee in holy people unto himself as he has sworn unto thee if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God and walk in his ways. So here are all the blessings if we obey and one of the blessings is when our enemies rise up against us one way, they're going to flee seven ways.

Now skip down to verse 15. "But it shall come to pass if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee and shall overtake thee."

So God says, "If you don't obey now, here are the curses." Let's skip down to verse 25. In fact, most of these curses are just the reversal of the blessings, but verse 25, The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies; thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them; and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. And thy carcass shall be the meat unto all the fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth; and no man shall fray them away. The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scabbard, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed. The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart. And thou shalt droop at noonday as the blind droopeth in the darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways, and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee."

That almost sounds like America today, doesn't it? I want you to understand, folks, there is a covenantal aspect to warfare. Do you realize we boast as being the most powerful military nation upon the earth and that boast is absolutely worthless without the protection of the sovereign God of heaven and earth. It's worthless. I've often thought it would be something if God let some little puny two-bit dictator like Castro or Hussein take us down just to show us it doesn't take much when God's against you. So if we disobey God's covenant God's going to curse us.

If we obey God's going to protect us. Now, warfare is divine activity. Remember this statement, warfare is divine activity. I want you to turn back to the book of Joshua chapter 4 and verse 13. Let me show you what I mean when I state that warfare is divine activity.

In Joshua chapter 4, the battle of Jericho everyone is familiar with, but the Bible says about 40,000 prepared for war passed over before the Lord unto battle to the plains of Jerico. Now, the amazing thing is the little phrase "before the Lord." About 40,000, now note this next phrase, prepared for war. They were going to fight. They had swords and spears and bows. They had their instruments of warfare. They were prepared for war passed over before the Lord unto battle.

Now the Hebrew word before is the word pone The word pone does not just simply mean in the face of or in the presence of. Now watch this you could read About 40,000 prepared for war passed over in the presence of or in the face of

Lord in a battle to the plains of Jericho. But it has more meaning than that I'm going to show it to you in just a moment another passage, but the word before here literally means as unto literally about 40,000 prepared for war passed over as unto the Lord."

In other words, their warfare was as unto the Lord. It was part and parcel of their worship of God and giving honor and glory to God. Even if you limited this word to "in the presence of" or "in the face of," it would still indicate divine approval. For 40,000 prepared the war, marched over in the presence As under the face of the Lord you see what I'm saying God would have to approve of it because very obviously they were doing it in his presence.

So 40,000 prepared for war passes over into battle now the text not only indicates divine approval But this text also indicates that warfare at certain times is an act of obedience and therefore an act of worship. Literally, they passed over worshipfully, religiously unto the Lord. In other words, what they were doing was part and parcel of their worship. It was war, but it was worship. Worship is holy. If war is an act of worship, It means it's holy as well when it is done worshipfully unto the Lord.

Now, look in your Bibles to 1 Samuel chapter 15. 1 Samuel chapter 15. Let me show you the impact of this little word "before the Lord." This is one of my favorite passages in the Bible. In this passage, God sends King Saul upon a mission. What was that mission? He was to destroy utterly the Amalekites. Look in verse 2, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, and when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slave, both man and woman, infant suckling, ox, sheep, camel and ass. By the way, who is initiating this war? God is.

So this is a holy war. And he tells Saul, "You go and kill everything. Don't leave anything alive." Well, you know the story. Saul and the people spared Agag, the king of the Amalekites. and the best of the oxen and the best of the sheep. About that time something went "Baaah" "Mooooooo" and Samuel said "What do you mean?" "You've obeyed God." "If you'd obeyed God, what meaneth the blading of the sheep and the loining the oxen in my ear?" "If you'd obeyed God, everything would be dead."

And then Saul said "But the people spared them, that they might sacrifice unto God." And skip down, let me just read this to you, verse 22 and 23. Powerful, powerful passage. "And Samuel said, 'Hath the Lord is great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken is better than the fat of rams.'" He's saying, "Saul, God, had rather have your obedience more than all the sacrifice that you can give Him." Why? Look in verse 23. "For rebellion He says the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

Now what happened to a witch? Stone or put to death. What happened to an idolater? Put to death. He says rebellion and stubbornness are just like that. That is they merit or deserve the death penalty. Now look what he says to Saul. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king.

So Saul, through his disobedience, through his rebellion, has lost his position as king. Now remember, Saul spared Agag. Now, I want you to turn in your Bibles, not turn, but look down in 1 Samuel chapter 15. And let's begin with verse 26. And Samuel said, Saul, I will not return with thee, for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel. And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and given it to a neighbor of thine that is better than thou. And also the strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent. Then he said, I have sinned; yet honor me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me that I may worship the Lord thy God.

So Samuel turned again after Saul and Saul worshiped the Lord. Now watch. Then said Samuel, bring me hither to meet Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. Can't you just see him, I mean, almost prancing, you know. He may have been one of those funny fellows, I don't know. But he came unto him delicately, and Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past." In other words, I've been spared. "And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women." And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal.

Now, I've got a question. Was Samuel wrong in what he did? No. Now, did you see that little phrase again? He hewed Agag in pieces. What's the next phrase? Before the Lord. Or literally, not just in the presence of the Lord, for God is omnipresent. God is everywhere in one place at in the totality of his being at every time. God is omnipresent, he's everywhere. It doesn't mean just in the presence of God, it literally means as unto the Lord. Let me put it plainly. Samuel did to Agag exactly what God wanted done to Agag. That's what he told Saul to do. He said, Saul, you kill everything. God wanted Agag dead. Samuel said, "God wants him dead. I'm going to kill him, and I'm going to do it as unto the Lord." It was part and parcel of worship and obedience in that time, in that sense, in that place, because Samuel was doing exactly what God wanted done. I'm trying to show you, folks, It's not only divine approval that God gives in this concept of holy war, but it is an act of worship as well as an act of war.

One last passage today, I want you to turn to 1 Kings chapter 18. Here's another story that everyone knows about. Everyone remembers the battle on Mount Carmel between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. 1 Kings 18 verse 36, you remember how the prophets of Baal have tried to get Baal to hear their cries and to answer their prayers and of course there was only silence. Beginning there with verse 36, "It came to pass at the time of the offering the evening sacrifice that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "The Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, that I am thy servant, and I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again." Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and they said, "The Lord He is God, the Lord, He is God. Watch. "And Elijah said to them,

'Take the prophets of Baal, let not one of them escape.' And they took them, and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and slew them there."

Question. Did Elijah do wrong? No, he did right. So what he did was an act of warfare. By the way, I want to point out that this began as a spiritual warfare. Was it not spiritual? Were not the prophets of Baal praying to their god? And was not Elijah praying to his god? Isn't that spiritual? Although spiritual it ended up physical, did it not? And what Elijah did was right and holy. So there is a concept of holy war because what Elijah did, he did as unto the Lord. He did exactly what God would have done to the prophets of Baal.

By the way, I want you to understand there's always a mixture of spiritual and physical warfare. Always. We're just so blind we can't see it. Don't you remember when Ahab and Jezebel were killing Naboth? and his family and a lot of other people as well and the prophets of God. That was spiritual warfare but it had physical implications. They were warring against the people of God. Here's just another aspect of it.

Do you realize you say, "Brother Weaver, wow, there's nothing like that in America." Oh, did you hear about all those people in Waco that got burned to death? spiritual warfare with a physical implication. Now whether you agree with them or not is immaterial. I'm just simply pointing out here was a spiritual war that ended up with a physical application. So there is a concept of holy war. Now let me make a couple of applications. Number one is this war is not inherently sinful in and of itself.

Now let me hasten to say this. There are evil wars. Yes, I'll get a hold of that a little bit later. There are wicked wars, yes, that is true. There are rebellious wars, yes, that is true. But evil, wicked and rebellious wars do not cancel out the fact that there are holy wars. So you cannot throw war out just simply because some wars are wicked and some wars are wrong. It is a lawful act of warfare when it's done according to the will and the word of God. Now secondly, since the war that is right is a holy war. Since the only war that is right is a holy war, we better make dead sure before we participate in any war, that it is indeed a holy war. You follow me? We have sent our sons to many parts of this country and many parts of the world to fight and die in unholy wars for no other reason than to protect somebody's oil wells and to make somebody millionaires. That's not a good reason to fight, folks. If a certain family wants to fight and protect their oil wells, let them send their children. Not mine. Let's make sure any war that we're engaging in is indeed a holy war.

You say, "Brother Weaver, how can I know whether or not a war is holy?" We'll continue a bit later.

Let's pray.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, We're so thankful for your love, for your grace, for your mercy. And Lord, I pray that you'd help us to have our thinking scriptural. Lord, we've been so humanized. And one of the problems is, Lord, one of these days we're going to get in trouble and it's going to be too late to figure all this out when we're in trouble. We need to know beforehand what your word teaches and what we may or may not do in obedience unto thee. Help us Father

to be holy, to be godly, to be scriptural and to always do that which is honoring and pleasing unto thee. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

I showed you over and over in Scripture how the Word of God emphasizes the fact that the Lord is a man of war and how the Lord fights over and over. And then, if you will, in Joshua chapter 4 and verse 13.

The Bible says about 40,000 prepared for war passed over before the Lord unto battle to the plains of Jericho. I told you about the Islamic jihad which simply is just simply the Islamic holy war and there is a concept of holy war that is taught in the Bible in fact all of the wars that God ordered Israel to engage in are referred to as the wars of the Lord as I quoted earlier how that the Bible calls God himself a man of war and the Bible teaches that God delivered Israel by means of war. So very obviously there is a concept of holy war.

You remember how these 40,000 prepared for war passed over before the Lord. That is, they passed over as unto the Lord, not only in the presence of, but as unto the Lord. It was part and parcel of their worship. Now let's begin today by letting me make this statement.

In ancient Israel all life was religious, and all life was covenantally related to God, and warfare was no exception. I'm going to prove this to you later on as we get into this study, not necessarily today, but warfare is not only religious in the Bible, but it is covenantally related to God. In ancient Israel as today, and I'll explain later, there is no such thing as a division between the secular and the sacred. You don't have a secular area here and the sacred area here. That is absolute heresy. According to the Bible, not only in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament, absolutely everything is sacred. War was certainly no exception. You see warfare according to the Bible, we remind you that the Bible is the book of the covenant. In the Bible, the Bible gives us the rules and the regulations and the parameters for engaging in warfare. So war was an aspect of worship for Israel. I want you to understand it had to be conducted according to the rules laid out by the sovereign God of the Bible.

Now we should not think these statements strange because of the teachings of the New Testament. Let me show you, turning your Bibles, if you would please, first of all to 1 Corinthians chapter 10 and look at verse 31. God says, "For the therefore you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God." Now, whether I eat or drink, I'm to eat and drink for God's glory. Whatever I do, whether it's digging a ditch or whether it's preaching or whether it's fighting, I'm to do all for the honor and the glory of God. So there is no division then between the secular and the sacred.

If you would turn right over to the book of Colossians chapter chapter 3, and look at verse 23. Here the word of God says, "And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men." So whatever I am engaged in, once again whether it's preaching or whether it's digging a ditch or whether it's farming or whether it's fighting in a holy war, and to do heartily as unto the Lord. So every sphere of our life is to be regulated by the Word of God. Every activity of our life is to be done in honor and in the glory of God. So very obviously there is no distinction between the secular and the sacred.

By the way, let me just point out the fact that this is one of the errors of modern day churchism. Most people will go to church on Sunday and they will appear so pious and so holy and so godly and then they leave and go out Monday through Saturday and they're as wicked as the devil himself. In other words, they're

saying this part is sacred and this part is secular. That's absolutely hilarious in the sense that it's so absolutely false. And that's why many of you saw the articles in the paper over here where the judge wrote that Christians, especially preachers, should not be engaged in politics. That's absolutely ridiculous. That's saying here's an area over which God has absolutely no authority and the Bible has absolutely nothing to say about.

There is no area, there is no sphere, there is no room in any place whatsoever over which God does not have absolute authority and absolutely sovereign control. So every sphere, every activity, every attitude of our life is to be regulated by the Word of God and war is absolutely, absolutely and no exception to the fact when we fight we fight according to God's terms. That is in faith for God's honor and glory based upon God's law now I've been developing this concept of holy war and I asked this question last week How can something so devastating so destructive and so deadly as war be considered holy in any sense whatsoever?

Well, let me give you a surprise I want you to turn in your Bibles to several passages. First of all, look in the book of Jeremiah chapter 6 and verse 4. In fact, we'll look at a number of these passages in Jeremiah, and there is a particular word that I want you to underline. Look in Jeremiah chapter 6 and verse 4 to begin with. Jeremiah 6 verse 4. God says, "Prepare ye war against her. Arise and let us go up at noon. Woe unto us, for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out."

Now, let's go back to this word "prepare." "Prepare ye war against her." Now, I want you to underline that little word "prepare." Turn over your Bibles to Jeremiah chapter 22 and look at verse 7. Here God says, "And I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons, and they shall cut down thy choice cedars and cast them into the fire." Now there's the little word "prepare." "And I will prepare destroyers against thee."

Turn right over to the book of Jeremiah, chapter 51. And let's read verses 27 and 28

"Set you up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her. Call together against her the kings of Ararat, Minyah, and Ashkenaz, appoint a captain against her, cause the horses to come up, and ask the rough caterpillars, prepare against her the nations with the kings of the means, and the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion." So, twice now God has said, "Prepare." And of course in the context he's talking about preparing war.

Now, if you look in the little book of Joel, Hosea, Amos; the book of Joel, Chapter 3 and verse 9 Joel 3 verse 9 look what God says Joel 3 verse 9 Proclaim me this among the Gentiles prepare war Wake up the mighty men let all the men of war draw near let them come up now in each passage that I have read we've come across this one new word prepare and God says prepare war.

Now the interesting thing about the word prepare is the Hebrew word is kadash. What does that mean? The Hebrew word kadash literally means to make clean. It means to make holy ceremoniously or morally. It means to consecrate, to dedicate, to be holy, to be sanctified, to be hallowed. Literally, when God said,

"Prepare war," He is saying, "Sanctify war." Now, let me show you. Look in your Bibles, if you would, to the book of Genesis, chapter 2 and verse 3. Genesis 2 and verse 3. Watch carefully. "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."

Watch verse 3, "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it," or literally, "and prepared it." It is exactly the same Hebrew word "kadesh." God sanctified or prepared the seventh day. If you turn over in your Bibles to the book of Exodus, chapter 29, verse 43. Look what God says. "And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory." Literally, "the tabernacle shall be prepared by my glory." Now, the interesting thing is this. The Hebrew word "kadesh" which is translated "prepare" when he said "prepare war" is the only Hebrew word in the Old Testament that is translated "sanctify." So the word "sanctify" and the word "prepare" are synonymous.

So when God says "prepare war," he is saying "sanctify war." It is the only word that is used over and over in the Old Testament for sanctification or for holiness, or for righteousness as such.

Now look in your Bibles to the book of Isaiah 13, and you'll see this word used, and it is translated "sanctified." Look in your Bibles, Isaiah chapter 13, and let's begin reading there with verse 1. Notice what God says. For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land; and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the Lord shall take them and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids; and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were, and they shall rule over their oppressors. It shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee best from my sorrow and from my fear and from my hard bondage wherein thou who made to serve.

Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon and say how have the oppressor ceased the golden city ceased note now the Lord have broken the staff of the wicked and the scepter of the rulers. He has broken the scepters of the rulers. Now this is not the that I wanted but it's the passage I got on reading in chapter 14 no wonder. Chapter 13 is what I wanted.

"The burden of Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see, lift you up a standard upon the high mountain, exalt the voice of them, shake the hand that they may go into the gates of the nobles. I've commanded my sanctified one, that's what I want, and I want you to note this is referring to the army. to the invading army. I have commanded my sanctified ones. I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness. The noise of a multitude in the mountains like as the great people, a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together.

They come from a far country from the end of heaven. Even the Lord watch and the weapons of his indignation to destroy the whole land." Now the point I want to make is this. First of all, in verse 4, the Lord of hosts must rip, that is, he calls together the host on the battle. Note verse 5 there, "the weapons of his indignation to destroy the whole land." But in verse 3, he said, "I have commended my sanctified ones or my prepared ones." It is exactly the same



word. So very obviously there is a concept of holy war because the word sanctified is used over and over not only in reference to war but in reference to the holy things of God as well.

Now in order for war to be holy several biblical principles must be evident. I'm going to give you four biblical principles of holy war today. Let me explain by making this statement. The list I'm going to give you may not be exhaustive. There may be other things that you could add to this list. But what I'm going to give you is an irreducible minimum. These four things must be if war is to be holy.

Now, we know there is such a thing as holy war, for God himself is engaged in it, and God has used the word "sanctified" over and over when he said, "Sanctify war," or "prepare war." Now, what are the four principles that determine whether or not a war is holy?

First of all, number one, the cause must be holy. The cause must be holy. The cause is that for which one is fighting. It is his reason for fighting. It is his goal in fighting. It is his aim in fighting. That means the cause must be holy. The cause is that which motivates one, which pushes one, which exerts power over one. What makes men fight? Well, you say they have a cause. Well, let me tell you. Do you realize some people will fight without a cause?

I want you to turn in your Bibles to Psalm 109, and I want you to note that it is the wicked, it is the ungodly that make war without a cause. Note if you would please Psalm 109, and let's begin reading there with verse 1. Psalm 109, and note if you would verse 1. God says, "Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise. For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me. They have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They compassed me about also with words of hatred and fought against me, what? Without a cause.

So the wicked and the heathen fight without a cause. You could go ahead and say this, that the wicked and the heathen will fight with an unholy and with an unjust cause. But when the godly fight, there is a cause and it is to be a holy cause. Let me pull this out. Simply because some person or simply because a number of people or one nation wishes to possess the resources of another people or another nation is not a sufficient cause to fight. That is nothing more than selfishness and covetousness and greediness and fight people just to possess their oil wells and diamond mines and gold mines.

Now, let me show you what I'm talking about. There must be a cause, and the cause must be holy. Look in your Bibles to 1 Samuel 17. I'm sure that everyone will be familiar with this passage. 1 Samuel 17. This is when David goes to fight Goliath and I'm not going to be developing this whole story.

But everyone knows how that the Philistine has presented himself morning and evening for 40 days Challenging the armies of Israel and of course the God of Israel as well. Let's begin reading with verse 22 of first Samuel chapter 17 David has been sent now to check on his brothers and David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage and ran into the army and came and saluted his brethren. And as he talked with them behold there came up the champion of the Philistine of Gath Goliath by name are the armies of the Philistines and spake according to the same words and David heard them. So now David is heard

Goliath challenge God and the armies of Israel and all the men of Israel when they saw the man and fled from him and were sore afraid.

And the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man that has come up? Surely to defy Israel is he come up. It shall be that the man who killeth him the king will enrich him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel." And David spake to the men that stood by him saying, "What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine and taketh away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God? And the people answered him after the manner saying, so shall it be done to the man that killeth him.

And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men, and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why cameest thou down hither? and whither hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride and the knowledge of thine heart. For thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

So now Eliab is looking down his nose upon David and he's saying David you're not even a warrior, you're not even fit to fight, get out of here. Watch verse 29, and David said what have I now done? Is there not a cause? Now skip down to verse 36. In verse 36 David says, "Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God." Now skip down to verse 45. "Then said David," he's going out to meet Goliath, "then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear and with a shield, but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel whom thou hast divided."

Now, look what he said in verse 29, "Is there not a cause?" God was dishonored, his people disgraced, and his army dismayed. David said, "Look, there's a cause." And the cause is God is being dishonored. is not receiving the honor and the glory that's due in his name from this. Moreover, his people are being disgraced. There is a cause. I'll fight the man. I'm ready to fight. I'm willing to fight. And the same God that delivered me out of the mouth of a lion and the bear, he'll deliver me out of the hands of this uncircumcised Philistine. So very obviously there was a cause.

Now, I'm not going to take the time today to go down through Scripture and list all of the holy causes. But I do want to show you another one. I want you to turn in your Bibles to the book of Nehemiah chapter 4. Nehemiah chapter 4, right after the book of Ezra, Ezra-Nehemiah. Nehemiah chapter 4, and everybody knows the story, or at least you should know the story, how Nehemiah is rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.

And there were some men that inspired against Nehemiah to stop the work and to kill him and the people who were helping him. Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshur the Arabian, the Ammonites, the Ashdodites, all these people were gathering together. They were going to plan a surprise attack and thus destroy the work and Nehemiah and those people. Let's begin reading Nehemiah chapter 4 with verse 8 and conspired all of them together to come in to fight against Jerusalem and to hinder it.

Nevertheless, we made our prayer unto our God and we set a watch against them day and night because of them. And Judah said, the strength of the bearers of burdens decay and there is much rubbish so that we're not able to build a wall. And our adversary said, they shall not know, neither see till we come in the midst among them and slay them and cause the work to cease. So they're planning a surprise attack They're going to destroy the work and kill Nehemiah and the people working in the wall. Verse 12, "And it came to pass that when the Jews who dwelt by them came, they said unto us, 'Ten times from all places which you shall return unto us, they will be upon you.'"

Now that's real encouraging, isn't it? Because here the ones dwelling close to the enemy came and said, "You can't win. I mean, man, they'll kill you before you know what's going to happen." Watch verse 13. Therefore said I in the lower places behind the wall, and in the higher places I even set the people after their families with their swords and their spears and their bows, and I looked and rose up and said unto the nobles and to the rulers and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them. Remember the Lord who is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren and your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses.

Now what was he saying? He's saying, "Look, they're going to come upon us and kill us. We better fight. We better fight, first of all, for our God. We better fight, secondly, for our brethren, for our sons, for our daughters, for our wives, for our houses." In other words, it is a holy fight and a holy war to defend the possessions and the people that God has entrusted to you. Whether it's defending your family, or defending your neighbors, or defending your brethren, it's a holy fight.

Look in your Bibles, if you would, please, to 2 Samuel chapter 10. 2 Samuel chapter 10. And let's begin reading there with verse 6. 2 Samuel 10 verse 6, "And when the children of Ammon saw that they stank before David, the children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Beth Rehob, and the Syrians of Zobah, twenty thousand footmen, and of the king of Maacah a thousand men, and of Ishtob twelve thousand men. And when David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the hosts of the mighty men. And the children of Ammon came out and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate, and the Syrians of Zobah, and of Rehob, and of Ishtob, and Meachob were by themselves in the field. When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice men of Israel and put them in array against the Syrians, and the rest of the people he delivered in the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put them in array against the children of Ammon. And he said, If the Syrians be strong for me, then thou shalt help me. And if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come to help thee. Watch, be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people and for the cities of our God. And the Lord do that which singeth him good. What is he saying? Be of good courage, let's fight for our people and for our cities, that is for the possessions that God has given to us.

So it is a holy and just cause then to fight to preserve your nation or your city or your family or your country any way you want to say it. Now, like I said earlier, it's not my intent today to list all the holy causes. I'm sure that would be humanly impossible because there are causes that will come up that I don't even know about. There are circumstances that would arise that I would certainly be

unfamiliar with. But the point is this. Whatever cause we are going to fight for, that cause must be scrutinized. That cause must be closely studied and compared with the Word of God.

Let me put it plainly. It is your responsibility to make sure that the cause is holy and right. It is your responsibility to consider whatever you're going to fight for in light of the Word of God. It's your responsibility to make sure that you do not fight for anything unbiblical, unchristian, and ungodly. It is your responsibility to make sure that you're not hoodwinked, you're not suckered, and that you don't run off half-cocked into something that you shouldn't be involved in. You follow that?

Well, a cause must be holy. And how in the world can you determine whether or not a cause is holy unless you examine it in light of the Word of God? Now, if you were to just take that one principle and compare it with the wars that were fought in the last 20 or 30 years, you'd probably find that we don't have a holy cause to fight in most of those wars.

Note: For America, the unholy wars we fought in started with the Civil War; some say with the Mexican-American War. Each one was over power and or money.

So the cause must be holy. That's the first prerequisite. Secondly, the army must be holy. I want you to turn in your Bibles to the book of Deuteronomy chapter 23. Deuteronomy 23. And look, if you would please, at verse 9. Look what God tells his people Deuteronomy 23 and verse 9 God says when the host that is when the army Go forth against thine enemies then keep thee from every wicked thing now note that when the host that is when the army go forth against thine enemies then keep thee from every wicked thing God says, "I not only want a holy cause, I want a holy army. If you're involved in fighting my battles," said God, "you make sure that you keep yourself from every wicked thing."

Now here is the second principle. God not only demands that the cause be holy, he demands that the people who fight for the holy cause be holy themselves. "Keep thee from every wicked thing." Now, the word "wicked" is the Hebrew word "wah." It means that which is bad, evil, wicked, and wrong.

Let me show you several passages. I want you to turn, first of all, to Deuteronomy chapter 17. And let's begin reading there with verse one. Deuteronomy 17 verse one. Now remember God said keep thee from every wicked thing, okay God says thou shalt not sacrifice unto the Lord by God any boar or sheep for in his blemish or any ill favoredness for that is an abomination in the Lord by God and If they're being found among you within any of my gates which the Lord by God giveth thee man or woman That have wrought wickedness in the sight of the Lord by God in Transgressing his covenant yet gone served other gods and worship them either the Sun or the Moon or any of the host of heaven which I have not commanded and to be told me that thou hast heard of it and inquired diligently and behold if it is true and the thing certain that such abomination is wrought in Israel thou shalt Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman which have committed that wicked thing Under by gates even that man or that woman and thou shalt stone him with stones till they die Now what is the wicked thing in the context here the wicked thing in the context happens to be idolatry? He says in verse 5 then shalt thou bring forth a man of that woman which have committed that Wicked thing you remember he said

when your army goes forth the war against your enemies then keep thee from every wicked thing. In this context, the wicked thing happens to be idolatry. Look in your Bibles to 1 Samuel chapter 30. "Then to all the wicked men and men of Belial and those that went with David and said, "Because they went not with us, we will not give them all to the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man and his wife and his children, that they may leave them away in the part." And David said, "You shall not do so, my brethren, that which the Lord had given us, who have preserved us and delivered the company that came against us into our hand."

Now, note back, if you would, please, at verse 22. Then answered all the wicked what? Men. That's the same word. Then answered all the wicked men. Now I'm trying to point out the fact that in Deuteronomy 17 the wicked thing was idolatry. In 1 Samuel chapter 30 the wicked thing is an attitude. Look in your Bibles if you would to Second Kings chapter 17, verse 11. "And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the Lord carried away before them, and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger. So once again the phrase "wicked things" here is in reference to idolatry and all of those things that go along with it.

Now, let me point this out. When God says for your host goes out to battle against your enemy, then keep thee from every wicked thing. The word "thing" is "dabar" in the Hebrew and it means, listen, a word, a matter, a thing, or a cause. So when God says keep me from every wicked thing. He's not just talking about actions He's talking about attitudes He's talking about ideas and speech as well. We're to keep everything holy our minds Our bodies our attitudes Then keep me from every wicked thing in the words God desires to use holy vessels for his work.

Now, look in your Bible. Let me show you several illustrations. Look in your Bibles, first of all, to the book of Joshua chapter 3. Joshua chapter 3, verse 5. "The children of Israel are crossing over the river." Look what God tells them through Joshua. Joshua chapter 3 verse 5, "And Joshua said unto the people, sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you." Now what did he tell them? Sanctify yourselves. Why? For tomorrow the Lord is going to do wonders among you. Look in verse 13 of chapter 4, our text, "About forty thousand prepared for war Over before the Lord and the battle isn't interesting. He just got out of his mouth sanctify yourselves. Now he says you pass over to the battle. Why? Because God not only desires a holy cause but he desires a holy people to fight in that holy cause.

Turn right over to the book of Joshua chapter 6 since we're talking about Jericho I Want you to understand that Jericho was totally cursed. Look in Joshua 6 verses 17 and 18. God says, Joshua 6 verse 17, "And the city," that is Jericho, "shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein to the Lord. Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in her house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.

And you, watch now, "and you in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, You might also say wicked thing. Lest you make yourselves accursed. When you take of the accursed thing and make the camp of Israel accursed and troubled. Now look what God said. God said Jericho is totally dedicated for

destruction. The people and everything in it. I want it all destroyed. Now God said you make sure that you keep yourself from that accursed thing. If you don't, you're going to become accursed just like Jericho was accursed.

Now let's go to chapter 7, Joshua chapter 7 verse 1. "But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing. For Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdab, the son of Zered of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel. And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-Aven, on the east side of Bethel, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai. Then they returned to Joshua and said unto him, Let not all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai, and make not all the people to labor further for they are but few. So there went up further of the people about three thousand men, and they fled before the men of Ai. And then they smote them about thirty and six men and they chased them from before the gate even to Sibearim and Smote them into going down where for the hearts of the people melted and became as water and Joshua rent his clothes and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the even time he and the elders of Israel and put dust upon their heads and Joshua said I'll I has the Lord God where for has thou And all bought this people over Jordan to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us.

Would to God we had been content to dwell on the other side of Jordan. O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall surround us around and cut off our name from the earth. And what wilt thou do unto thy great name? And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up. Therefore, liest thou thus upon my face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them; for they have even taken of thee a cursed thing, and have also stolen, and assembled also, and have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore, the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed.

Watch it. Neither will I be with you any more, you destroy the accursed from among you. Up sanctify the people and say sanctify yourselves against tomorrow for thus said the Lord God of Israel there's an accursed thing in the midst of thee Israel thou canst not stand before thine enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you.

Now what did Achan done? Achan had seen the goodly Babylonian storage at the wedge of gold and silver and he had stolen it and taken it and hidden it in his tit. What happened to Achan? He was caught, he was condemned, he and his family were burned to death and stoned and covered up and left. Why? Because he committed an unholy act. He took that which God had said was not to be taken, Everything in Jericho was dedicated to destruction.

Now I won't hasten to tell you that there is a law of booty in the Bible and we'll discuss that but this is a distinct and separate thing because God had specifically said everything in Jericho was dedicated to destruction everything in Jericho was to be a curse And Achan stole and he brought the curse upon himself, upon his

family, and upon the nation. And did you hear what God said? "Neither will I be with you any more until you deal with this."

Now let me tell you something, folks. Sin does not just affect us alone. I've heard men say that we're drunkards. So, what if I get drunk, it's not affecting anybody but myself. That's not true. It affects your wife, it affects your children, it affects your family, and if you have a car that can kill somebody, it affects somebody else too, you see. You can't just sin by yourself and say, well it's not going to affect anybody but me. Sin always affects other people as well. God says, look, I want a holy army, because your sin will affect those that you associate with. Let me tell you something folks, if I'm in a hole fighting for a holy cause, I want somebody next to me that's holy as well. I don't want some drunken pervert next to me that's going to bring the wrath and the curse of God down upon me because I'm next to him. I want somebody next to me that's going to do what's right. And whoever's next to me is going to want somebody next to him that's going to do what's right.

I want you to turn in your Bibles, if you would, please, to 2 Chronicles 25. Let me show you another illustration. 2 Chronicles 25, beginning with verse 5, "Amaziah, king of Judah, had hired some men of Israel to go with him to fight." There's only one problem were involved deeply in idolatry and Baal worship at this particular time.

So he had hired 100,000 Israelites to help him fight. Watch this. 2 Chronicles 25 verse 5. Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together and made them captains over thousands and captains over hundreds. According to the houses of their fathers throughout all Judah and Benjamin, and he numbered them 20 years old and above, and found them 300,000 choice men able to go forth to war that could handle spear and shield. So, he's got 300,000 soldiers. Watch verse 6. "He hired also 100,000 mighty men of valor out of Israel for 100 talents of silver. But there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, "Let not the army of Israel go with thee, for the Lord is not with Israel to wit with all the children of Ephraim. But if thou wilt go, do it. Be strong for the battle. God shall make thee fall before the enemy, for God hath power to help and to cast down."

Now, let me stop right there. Now, the man of God said, "Look, don't let the Israelites go with you. God's not with them. They're unholy. They're involved in idolatry. Don't let them go. But now if you're going to go, King, and take them, I want you to understand God's going to cast you down before your enemy. You're going to lose. That's all there is to it. Now watch verse 9. Here's a true politician. "And Amaziah said to the man of God, but what shall we do for the hundred talents which I've given to the army of Israel? What are we going to do about all the money I've already spent? And the man of God answered, answered, "The Lord is able to give thee much more than this." Don't worry about the 100,000 talents of silver. God can take care of that.

You see what I'm saying? But now God says, "Don't let them go with you because at this time they're unholy." Now, I want you to turn in your Bibles to the book of Luke chapter 3. The book of Luke chapter 3. God not only demands a holy cause, for the holy people to fight in that cause. Luke chapter 3. John has been preaching repentance. There comes some soldiers to John and they ask the question, what shall we do? That is, what shall we do to evidence our

repentance? Look what he says in Luke chapter 3 verse 14, "And the soldiers, like and man it of him saying, and what shall we do? That is how hands that they can't be holy. The can't.

Do you remember chapter 23 beginning there with verse nine? He says, when the host will fought against thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing. Now here's the can't. If there be among you any man that is not clean by reason of uncleanness, That chances him by night Then shall he go abroad out of the camp. He shall not come within the camp. We're talking about the war camp now But it shall be when evening cometh on he shall wash himself with water and when the Sun is down he shall come into the camp again Thou shalt have a place also without the camp for the thou shalt go forth abroad and Thou shalt have a paddle upon my weapon and And it shall be when thou wilt ease thyself abroad, thou shalt dig therewith and turn back and cover that which cometh from thee. For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of the camp to deliver thee and to give up thine enemies before thee. Therefore shall thy camp be holy that he see no unclean thing in thee and turn away from thee.

Now, I want you to note how God is demanding holiness in the camp. First of all, the person who has become unclean through a nightly occurrence or what we would call an accident, so to speak, wants to go out of the camp and remain there until evening, until he had ceremoniously cleansed himself.

Moreover, God says you must have a little training out side the camp. And he said each soldier was to have a paddle or a shovel or a digging implement so that he went outside to use the bathroom or to ease himself. He dug a hole and then when he finished he turned again and covered it. Now this may be part of where we get our slogan cleanliness is next to godliness.

By the way, that phrase is not in the Bible although a lot of people think it is But let me tell you something Is it as important as sanitation is? And as important as cleanliness is. This law does not have in view sanitary reasons behind it. Why did God tell them you've got to have a little training outside the camp that you use a shovel you cover that which comes of yourself. Why would God say that? Look in verse 14. Here's why.

For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp to deliver thee and to give up thine enemies before thee therefore shall thy camp be holy that he see no unclean thing in thee and turn away from thee.

God says I want the camp to be holy. The camp must be holy, and it must be kept holy, because Yahweh himself walks there in the midst of his people. These requirements were to be followed out of consideration for and reverence to God and his holiness. You see, it is not that the extricate from man was shameful in and of itself. It's not a shameful thing that we have to go to the bathroom. That's the way God made us. Okay? It's not that that was shameful in and of itself, but through disobedience and a lack of reverence which the people would display in not removing it, it would offend the Lord and drive him out of the camp.

Now, let me make this point. Here is an argument from the lesser evil to the greater. Are you listening? If God is so fastidious, if God is so peculiar, if God is so particular about what you and I would call little things, I mean, you know, just keeping a clean bathroom, just having cleanliness in your body. God is so



fastidious and so concerned about that. How much greater is he concerned about impure thoughts, immoral words, ungodly attitudes and wicked actions. You see what I'm saying? God is saying, I want this little thing taken care of that you may know. I want the big things taken care of as well. Because he said, I am holy and if I'm going to walk in your camp, I don't want any unclean thing around. I want absolute holiness.

So, we're not only to have a holy cause, a holy army, but a holy camp. I told you this before, or at least most of you I have told, but I'll point it out again. You remember that one of the nicknames for a prostitute is a hooker. Remember I told you how they got that nickname? Because the Yankee general, fighting Joe Hooker, in order to boost the morale of his soldiers, let the ladies of the night into his camp for his men. And these prostitutes were known as Hooker's ladies. Later on the term "ladies" was removed and they were just known as hookers. God demands that the camp be holy, as well as the men, as well as the cause.

Now, one last thing today, and that is this. Fourthly, the leader must be holy. Do you realize divine warfare is usually not mediated by a Pentagon official or a cabinet officer. I can assure you that Schwartzkopf and Colin Powell would never make it in one of God's wars as a leader. Bill Clinton certainly could never make it. Because God demands that the leader be holy. Usually when divine warfare is ordered.

Now, where do you have a holy cause, a holy army, a holy camp, but you have a holy leader? You have a Moses or a Joshua. I want you to turn in your Bibles to the book of Exodus, chapter 17. Exodus 17. And let's begin reading there with verse 8. Exodus 17, verse 8. "Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, and fight with Amalek. God in mine hand the rod spoke of authority. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek, and Moses and Aaron and her went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass when Moses held up his hand that Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hand Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy, and they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat thereon, and Aaron and had stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side, and his hands were steady until they're going down in the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. And the Lord said unto Moses, write this for memorial in a book and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua, for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

Now what in the world was Moses doing? Moses was up on the hill holding up the rod of God, which spoke of authority, no doubt interceding and praying at the same time, while Joshua was down there fighting with a sword. I wonder how many prayer councils and prayer meetings that our leaders had over in Desert Storm or over in Vietnam. Do you understand what I'm saying? Probably none.

I'm sure the men who prayed were in foxholes, but the leaders didn't have the prayer meeting. They didn't hold up the Word of God or the authority of God.

Turn in your Bibles, if you would, please. to the book of Hebrews, chapter 11. Hebrews, chapter 11. Watch this. Hebrews 11. Look what the author of the book of Hebrews says. Hebrews 11, verse 32. "And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah,

and of David, and of Samuel, and of the prophets, watch, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant, and fight, turned a flight the armies of the aliens. I want to call your attention to the fact that it was Gideon and Samson and Gersach and Samuel and Jephthah and the prophets.

In other words, they were godly men. You know, we think from time to time that what we need in this country is a good, strong, tough, disciplined, knowledgeable military leader to lead us in a battle that we might win. I've got news for you, folks. You can pick the top and the toughest and the most disciplined military leader in the world, and we will not win without God. And what we do not need is a top-tough leader. What we do need is a holy, godly leader who is tuned to the Lord himself. Because God's battles are built around the premise of holiness and righteousness and justice.

Now, let me make just a couple of applications. First of all, it is each man's responsibility to determine according to the word of God the holiness and the justice. That means we must know what God teaches in every area of life, and we must always act in accordance with the Word of God.

I'll share this with you. In the last unregistered conference up in India, there were probably several hundred men who went forward at the end of the service and made a covenant with God and with each other that if any agency ever came to take each other's children, the rest of us would go there and do whatever was necessary to preserve those children. You say, "Brother Weaver, I wouldn't fight for that." Well, you better find out what God says about children being the heritage of the Lord. See what I'm saying? We better know what the Word of God teaches. If we have to wait until it's too late, most of us will never act. We better know what a holy cause is. We better know that God demands his army to be holy, his camp to be holy, and his leaders to be holy.

Secondly, once we determine to fight and war, we must remember that God has rules of engagement. God has laws and ordinances concerning war and fighting. And we must remember that above all we must be holy in order that we will not be an aiken in the camp. An aiken only destroys. He never protects. He never preserves. If a man is in a battle for what he can get out of the battle, he is in it for the wrong reason. We've got to learn to be holy in every area of our life. We need to pray, "Lord, help me never to be naked. Help me to think of others as well as your honor and your glory and put you and others above myself and my desires and I'm going to be holy in every situation." There is holy war. Shall we pray? Father, we ask you today to help us, to teach us, to build us up in the most holy faith. Enable us, Lord, to understand the concept that God is a warrior and that your wars are indeed holy. Enable us, Lord, to always be able to examine everything in light of the Word of God, and then once we know what Thou dost teach, to act upon it. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

We'll take just a few moments and go from there. 2 Chronicles chapter 6, and note if you would please in verse 34. The Bible says Solomon is praying. He says, "If thy people go out to war against their enemies, by the way that thou shalt send them, and they pray unto thee toward this city which thou hast chosen, and

the house which I have built for thy name, then hear thou from the heavens their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause."

We are dealing with the biblical doctrine of war. The very first message I brought was the fact that God is a warrior. I shared from Scripture where the Scripture says that God is a man of war, that is, His name. I also dealt with the fact that those wars in the Bible are referred to as the wars of the Lord. I went through numerous passages of Scripture proving that concept. And then the second message I brought was the concept of holy war. And I showed in the Bible how that God, himself wages war, how that God himself fights. Very obviously whatever God is engaged in is absolutely holy. And then the third message I brought was still a continuation on the concept of holy war. And I showed you that there were some prerequisites in the Bible as far as war being holy.

First of all I said, number one, the cause must be holy. You remember David said in Samuel chapter 17, "Is there not a cause?" Not only must the cause be holy, but I shared with you also secondly how that the army must be holy, because God told the army that they were to keep themselves from every wicked thing. And then thirdly, I shared with you from Scripture how that the camp must be holy. So God not only demands holiness in the cause, in the army, but in the camp as well. And then, of course, I showed you that holy war is usually led by a covenant mediator, that is, a holy leader, someone who represents God and serves God. Now, let me begin today by telling you that I'm going to have a continuation still of the concept of holy war, and, Lord willing. Next, I will also preach on the concept of holy war and then proceed on some other area, but I'm trying to establish the fact that we have been so humanistically taught and so humanistically developed, we've always thought that all war was automatically wrong and that war was inherently evil in and of itself. And of course those are untrue concepts.

You see, holy war is always directed by God himself. As we just read in 2 Chronicles chapter 6 and I'll call your attention to it again in verse 34. "Saul and his people go out to war against their enemies," note this next phrase, "by the way that thou shalt send them." So God does send his people out to war from time to time. And you've got to remember that God himself is the captain of the host. Therefore war is divine activity.

Now let me begin today in my introduction to try to ask and answer a question. And then I want to proceed on the spiritual preparation for war in the Bible. A question that should be absolutely fundamental to every individual is this. How in the world do we discern, or how do we know whether or not God orders or demands a holy war? What is our basis? What is our foundation?

Let's suppose something arises in the next week or the next month or the next year and warfare is talked. What do we do? How do we know whether or not a war is of God or not? Let me just try to answer this and I'm going to show you that we should know chiefly by three ways or literally by four I should say. The fourth one should be very obvious First of all number one on some occasions in the Bible God revealed his will to his leader or his covenant Mediator who then informed the nation. So let me just try to summarize that sometimes God singled out a leader God singled out his covenant mediator, that holy leader, and God

revealed His will to that holy leader who then turned around and informed the nation this is what God would have us to do.

Look in your Bibles, first of all, to the book of Numbers chapter 25. I'm going to try to give you just enough scripture to establish each of these concepts. Notice in Numbers chapter 25, And notice verses 16 and 17. Now God is speaking to Moses. Note the scripture says, Numbers 25 verse 16 and 17, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Vex the Midianites, and smite them." Why? "For they vex you with their wives; wherefore would they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cosby, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for people's sake.

Now God spoke to Moses and said in verse 17, "Vex the Midianites and smite them." So God literally told Moses, "Begin a war with them." What I want you to do is wipe them out. So God then told Moses, and Moses turned around and informed the nation that's exactly what they were supposed to do.

Now if you would turn over in your Bibles to the book of Deuteronomy chapter 2. Let me show you several passages where God told the leader on some occasions not to make war and on other occasions to make war. Notice Deuteronomy chapter 2 begin there with verse 1. Moses writes, "Then we journeyed and took our journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea as the Lord spake unto me and we encompassed Mount Seir many days."

Now Mount Seir is where Esau lived. "And the Lord spake unto me saying, You have encompassed this mountain long enough, turn you northward, and command you the people saying you are to pass through the coast of your brethren, the children of Esau, who dwell in Seir, and they shall be afraid of you, take you good heat unto yourselves, meddle not with them, for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a footbreadth, because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for possession. You shall buy meat of them for money that you may eat, and you shall also buy water of them for money that you may drink." And so God says, "Don't make war against them."

Skip down to verse 9. "And the Lord said unto me, Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle; for I will not give thee of their land for possession, because I have given unto the possession of Lot for a possession." Note if you would please, skip down to verse 19, "And when thou comest "And I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon any possession, because I have given it to the children of Lot for a possession."

So here are three instances where God has told the covenant leader, "Don't make war against Edom, against Ammon, or against Moab." Now if you'll skip down to verse 24 in the same chapter, God now says, "Rise you up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon. Behold, I have given unto thy hand Sihon, the king of the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land; begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle.

This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and shall be in anguish because of thee." So now God tells him, I do want you to make war against Sihon, the king of the Amorites. Now if you look in chapter 3 and verse 1, "Then we turned and went up the way to Bashan, and Og

the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Endre, and the Lord said unto me," note that phrase, "and the Lord said unto me, 'Fear him not, for I will deliver him and all his people and his land into thy hand, and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon king of Amorites who dwelt at Heshbon. So the Lord our God delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan and all his people, and we smote him until none was left remaining in him. So here God says, "Make war."

Now, turn over your Bibles to the book of Deuteronomy chapter 7. Deuteronomy 7, look at verses 1 and 2. Deuteronomy 7, Verse 1 and 2 God says when the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whether thou goest to possess it, and cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou, and when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them thou shalt make no covenant with them nor show mercy unto them.

So here are seven nations now that God has told Moses you are to make war with. You're to destroy them. So it's very obviously plain. Now, I'm not going to ask that you turn to this one, but you remember in Joshua chapter 5, God not only told Joshua to do battle against Jericho, it was God who, in Joshua chapter 6, gave Joshua the strategy, the battle plan for defeating Jericho. So very obviously God is saying here is one place I want you to make war.

Let me show you one other. Turn in your Bibles to 1 Samuel chapter 15. 1 Samuel 15. So I think this is very obvious that sometimes in the Bible God told the leader this is what we're to do. So 1 Samuel chapter 15 begin there with verse 1. Here it is in black and white. Samuel also said in a Psalm, "The Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people over Israel. Now therefore harken thou unto the voice of the words of the Lord." Now what is the Lord saying to Saul? "Thus saith the Lord of hosts. I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid weight from him in the way when he came up out of Egypt. smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have and spare them not but slay both man and woman infant and suckling ox sheep camel and ass so God says kill them all but now God has revealed his will to the leader who was a holy and a godly man.

Now there's a second way that we may know that God would have us make holy war what is it sometimes the leaders were not told by God that they were to make holy war, but they had to inquire of God and discern the mind of the Lord. I want you to turn in your Bibles to 1 Samuel chapter 23. 1 Samuel chapter 23. Let me give you just a couple of illustrations.

So there are times now that the leaders must ask God what his will is. God does not all the time make his mind known to the leader, at least not directly. Let me explain. 1 Samuel chapter 23 verse 1. "Then they told David, saying, 'Behold, the Philistines fight against Kila, and they rob the threshing floors.' Therefore David," watch now, "inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the Lord said unto David go and smite the Philistines and save Keilah and David's men said to him watch now behold we be afraid here in Judah How much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines then David inquired of the Lord yet again and the Lord answered him and said arise go down to Keilah for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand and So David and his

men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines and brought away their cattle and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

Now watch verse 6. And it came to pass when Abiathar the son of Abimelech fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an ephod in his hand. Now David hears that the Philistines are attacking Keilah. And he asks God, "Lord, what should I do?" should I go up and smite the Philistines? And God said, I want you to go because you're going to whip the Philistines. But his men are afraid. And they said, David, you better check with the Lord a second time. You better make sure God said that. And so David did. And once again, God said, I want you to go and smite the Philistines. Now I want you to know in this instance, God did not inform David immediately, here's what I want you to do. David had to ask and seek God for direction now the Bible says that he inquired of God. You've got to ask this question. How did he inquire of God? Well verse 6 give you gives you the answer because a biathar who was a priest He was the son of a himalayk who was a priest when he came down he came down with an ephod in his hand.

Now I want you to turn in your Bibles very quickly to the book of Numbers, chapter 27. Let me show you what this ephod contained. And look, if you would, please, at verse 21. Here's the direction. "And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of the year and before the Lord at his word shall they go out and at his word shall they come in both he and all the children visual with him even all the congregation now the ephod contained what was known as the year and the thumb and now I don't exactly know how that worked and I don't guess any Bible scholar does. We can generalize, But the Urim and the Thummim happened to be a way to discern the mind of God. Evidently, questions were asked in a yes or no fashion, and depending which one the priest brought out, the answer came yes or no.

So when Abiathar then came down to David, he brought this ephod, which was a priestly garment, which the priest wore. He wore it around his chest, He stuck his hand in and pulled out either the year and the feminine and I want you to know that this verse that talks about that His word shall they go out and in his word shall they come in now?

Usually those phrases going out and coming in refer to making war. So when a biathlon came down to David's it let me check this out. Let me find what God would have us to do now. I want you to turn in your Bible to the book of Luke chapter 22. Let me show you another instance, Luke chapter 22. Here is where Christ is in the garden and they come after Christ with their swords and their staves. And I was reading this this past week and I got tickled. Let me show you why. Look in Luke chapter 22 and let's begin reading there with verse 47. "And while he yet spake, behold a multitude came and he that was called Judas one of the twelve went before him and drew near to Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said unto Judas, "Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?"

When they that were about him saw what would follow, they knew what was coming down. They knew these men had swords and staves and they saw Judas betraying him with a kiss. They said unto him, now watch the question, "Lord, Shall we smite with the sword? Now you say, "Brother Weaver, why did you get tickled?" Look at the next verse. "And one of them smote the servant of the high priest and caught his right ear."

Now here's the question. Watch this. "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" You know, like, "Lord, we're asking, but while the answer's being delayed, we're going to cut our way through just in case, you know." Well, very obviously they did right in asking and probably did right in slicing with a sword as well, but the point is that at least they did ask. They may not have waited for an answer, but the point is many times we do have to inquire of God.

Now we don't have urines and thumens today, but we do have the Word of God, and we do have our great high priest, the intercessor, and we have means, and we have access into the holy of holies. So sometimes, number one, God just makes his word known and his will known to the leader. Other times, leaders have to fast and pray and ascertain the mind of God. Now there's a third way that we can know the will of God about holy war. Let me give it to you like this. In some instances, God just simply placed in the hearts of the people what they were to do. In some instances, God just placed in the hearts of the people what was right and what they were to do. I'm not going to go into detail in this one because we're going to be looking at some of these passages in detail in the next few weeks, but let me give you an instance. You remember in Genesis chapter 14 when Lot and his family were taken captive by those kings. When Abraham heard that his nephew had been captured, he didn't inquire of God. God didn't tell him to do anything, nor did he seek the mind of God. He just armed his 318 trained servants and went after him. Why? Because he knew it was right to do that. He knew it was the right thing to do.

Let me give you another illustration. Israel did not seek God when they warred against Benjamin, one of their own tribes, when Benjamin was protecting a bunch of sodomites and murderers and refusing to give them up. They didn't inquire of God whether we should fight or not. Now they did inquire of God as to which tribe should fight first, but they already knew that they should fight.

God had just put it in their hearts. David did not have a direct revelation from God that he was to fight Goliath, nor did he seek God as to whether it would be God's will for him to fight Goliath. He just knew that it was the right thing to do and he did it. Now, we are not told in scripture that some of those judges, men like Ehud, sought the Lord or had a revelation from God. They just knew it was time to do something. God had placed it in their hearts and they did it.

So on the one hand we know a holy war is in order when God reveals it to a holy leader, or number two, when the leaders cry and pray and seek the face of God and God shows them, or number three, when God puts it in the hearts of his people, or number four, you could say this, when God just simply begins to sovereignly destroy our enemies before us. And sometimes he does that. You will find that in the Bible. Many times the people didn't even have to fight. God just started the war himself. And Therefore you know now let me just give you a word of caution before we go further.

Usually when holy war is an order one of these four things are going to be made very clear I've always had people ask me especially in the last three or four years. They said master When do we know when to fight and my answer to has always been this, when it's time to fight, we will all know. We'll know. You say, "How will we know?" Either God is going to raise up a leader and say, "Now's the

time, boy." And when God raises up a leader, guess what God's going to do? God is going to unite our hearts to follow him.

Or secondly, our leaders will get so burdened, and when I say our leaders, I'm not just referring to civil leaders now, okay? I'm including spiritual leaders in this as well. Or they'll get so burdened they will pray and seek the Lord's face and God will say, "Now's the time." And once again, God will bind the hearts to those leaders.

Or thirdly, God will just put in every man's heart where we will know that is exactly what we're to do. You say, "Brother Weaver, give me a further explanation. I can't." Because the Word of God does it but all I'm saying is you will know I will guarantee you if you had been alive in 1776. You'd have known this time to fight. You've been alive in 1861. You'd have known it's time to fight. You just would have known it because God would have placed it in your heart now. Let me just go a little bit further today with this concept of holy war you see war is not only holy because God makes it was not only holy because God demands a holy cause and a holy army and a holy camp and a holy leader. But I want you to understand that in the Bible there were numerous spiritual preparations for war. In fact, I'm going to say this and I'll make the application at the end, the spiritual preparations were more important than the physical preparations.

You say, "What kind of spiritual preparations are we talking about?" Well, first of all, there was sacrifice. I want you to turn in your Bibles, if you would, to 1 Samuel chapter 13. And let's begin there. And let's begin reading with verse 1. In fact, we'll read through the first 14 verses. "Saul reigned one year, and when he had reigned two years over Israel, Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel, whereof two thousand were with Saul at Micmach in Mount Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah Benjamin, and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent.

Now watch carefully. And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it, and Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, let the Hebrews hear. Now, I want you to recall this phrase because I'll explain it later. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, let the Hebrews hear. And all Israel heard say, that Saul had smitten the garrison of the Philistines and that Israel also was had an abomination with the Philistines and the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal. And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel.

Now I want you to watch this multitude. 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen and people as the sand which is on the seashore in multitude, and they came up and pitched in Micmash eastward toward Beth-Ava. When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, for the people were distressed, then the people did hide themselves in caves and in thickets and in rocks and high places and in pits. I mean, man, they knew the odds were against them, and so they said, "We better get out of here." And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan into the land of Gad and Gilead. They just left the country. And all the people followed him, that is Saul, trembling, that is the few that he had. And he tarried seven days according to the set time that Samuel had appointed, but Samuel came not to Gilgal and the people were scattered from him. And Saul said, "Bring hither a



burnt offering to me and peace offerings," and he offered the burnt offering. And it came to pass that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came, and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him. And Samuel said, what hast thou done? And Saul said, because I saw that people were scattered from me, and that thou cameest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash, therefore said I, the Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication of the Lord, I forced myself therefore and offered a burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul, thou hast done foolishly. Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God which he commanded thee. For now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever, but now thy kingdom shall not continue. The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.

Now what was Saul's great sin? Saul's great sin was in offering the burnt offering. Now, very obviously this sacrifice was to be made before the war. Samuel had told Saul, "You wait for me there at Gilgal. Don't you start anything without me because I will come and we will offer the sacrifice."

It was a religious act. It was an act of worship. When Saul began to see the people defect hiding, and leaving him, and Samuel showed up right on the dot. Saul forced himself, he said, and offered the sacrifice.

Now, I want you to understand that the sacrifice was not only a means of worship, not only a means of supplicating God, but evidently was also a means of bonding the people with their leader. Because Saul said, "When I saw that the people were defecting, when they were not leading me, or leaving me, when they were leaving me and not following me, when I saw that, I forced myself and I went ahead and offered the sacrifice."

Why was the sacrifice so important? Because it was an act of employing God for His blessing and for His protection. So very obviously, when the battle was to begin, or when the war was to begin, and there was always this act of sacrifice, this act of worship, seeking God's blessing. And the people then would be cemented with their leader because they knew that he was acting in accordance with the will and the word of God.

Now, let me just hasten to explain it like this. You say, "Brother Weaver, that means if we come to a battle today, if we come to war, then we have to offer a burnt sacrifice." And the answer is no. Why would we not offer a burnt sacrifice?

1 Corinthians 5 verse 7, "For Christ, even our Passover, is sacrificed for us." Although we would not offer a burnt sacrifice, what we would do is gather together in prayer and worship the Lord Jesus Christ who is the true sacrifice and rest upon His shed blood and His merits and his works and his sovereign protection and power. The principle is the same, although the circumstances may have changed. So the very first preparation then was an act of sacrifice.

You'll note, if you would, by the way, in Judges chapter 6, don't have to turn there, but before Gideon began his conquest, he offered sacrifice, even tore down the altar of Baal, and the altar of the grove, and then used the cattle there and sacrificed unto God.

So there was, first of all, the act of sacrifice, which was an act of worship. Secondly, there was the act of circumcision. Look in the book of Joshua, and let's begin with chapter 3. I read this This passage last week, let me read it again and then continue the thought. Joshua chapter 3 and verse 5, they're passing over, "And Joshua said unto the people, 'Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.'"

So the word "sanctify" means to sacrifice or to make holy or to set apart yourself, consecrate yourself. So, "Sanctify yourselves." Now, look in Joshua chapter 5. Please remember that this is right before the battle of Jericho.

Joshua chapter 5 verse 1, "And it came to pass when all the kings of the Amorites, who were on the other side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, which were by the sea, heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel until we passed over, that their heart melted, neither was their spirit in them anymore because the children of Israel. At that time the Lord said to Joshua, "Make thee sharp knives and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time." Now that doesn't mean the same men the second time, but watch. "And Joshua made him sharp knives and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins."

And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise. All the men that came out of Egypt that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness, by the way, after they came out of Egypt. Now all the people that came out were circumcised, but all the people that were born in the wilderness, by the way, as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord. Unto whom the Lord swear that he would not shew them the land which the Lord sware unto their fathers, that he would give us a land that floweth with milk and honey. And their children whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way. And it came to pass when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp till they were whole. And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day. And the children of Israel encampment Gilgal and kept the Passover.

Please remember they're about to go to battle and kept the Passover on the 14th day of the month at eve in the plains of Jericho. Now why in the world would Joshua circumcised the men of war. Humanly speaking, that was a very unwise thing to do. You say, "Brother Weaver, why in the world was it a very unwise thing to do?"

Humanly speaking. Don't you remember the story of Dinah in Genesis chapter 34 where Shechem raped the daughter of Jacob. And then he wanted her for his wife. And so he and Hamor, his father, came and said, "Give us this woman so my son can marry her." And the children of Jacob, the sons of Jacob said, "We can't do that. That is a reproach unto us if we marry anybody that is uncircumcised."

Now, we'll tell you what you do. "We'll circumcise every man in the city, and then we'll let you have our daughter. If you don't, we won't." Well, they went back to

the city and they said, "Look, these people will dwell among us if we'll just be circumcised." "Well, will not their cattle be our cattle? I mean, everything they have will be ours. Let's do that." And so all the men were circumcised. And on the third day, when the men were so sore they couldn't move, Simeon and Levi took swords and walked in the city and killed every man there. Just two men. So humanly speaking, it was a very unwise thing to do.

But the reason it was done was because it was not only in obedience to God, but circumcision was the sign of the covenant. You follow that? And these people had to reproach if Eden spill upon them.

You've got to remember in Exodus chapter 4. You remember when Moses was going back to the land to deliver the children of Israel? Don't you remember this or not? But the Bible says that God met Moses by the way and sought to kill him. God had sent him back! Now why is God seeking to kill him? Zipporah, his wife, takes a knife and circumcises their son and she throws the foreskin at her husband's feet and said a bloody husband thou art to me. God sought to kill him because he had failed to remember and to keep the first act of covenantal obedience which was circumcision.

Now you ask the question, "Brother Weaver, does that mean then that every warrior that fights should be circumcised? I'm going to answer that yes, but you're going to have to understand what I mean by that. I want you to turn in your Bibles to the book of Colossians chapter 2. Colossians chapter 2.

By the way, I'm not preaching on this today, but I will tell you this much. There are not only, there was not only a religious significance to circumcision in the Old Testament, there were also health benefits in the Old Testament. And that even continues today, by the way. I realize a lot of people do not circumcise their male children anymore, but studies have been done to show that it is really health-wise one of the wisest things to do, but you say, "Why did you say the warriors needed to be circumcised?" Well look in your Bible's Colossians chapter 2 and let me show you what circumcision is really typical of notice, Colossians chapter 2 verse 11 Paul is writing to these Colossian Christians and he says in whom also you are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism wherein also you are risen with him through faith of the operation of God who had raised him from the dead.

So, what is circumcision a type of? The new birth, the covenantal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. That's why he says, "In whom now we are circumcised." How? with the circumcision made without hands. In other words, man doesn't do it, God does it. It means our hearts are circumcised. In fact, all through the Bible, God commanded the people to circumcise their hearts before the Lord. That is, you obey the Lord. So, the answer comes back, yes, the people need to be circumcised, and all that means is they need to be begotten by God. They need to have a relationship with God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, circumcision then was a spiritual preparation for battle. Very obviously, that's why God commanded it in Joshua chapter 5. Now, I want you to turn in your Bibles to 2nd Corinthians chapter, not 2nd Corinthians, 2nd Samuel chapter 11. Let me try to answer a question for you. I don't know if this question is ever in

your mind, but it certainly is in mine. And by the way, I've told you this before. That is one reason I preach on some things because when I read the Bible I have questions and I don't know the answer. And I want to find out what the answer is. And I figure if it bothers me and I need to know the answer, it probably bothers other folks as well and they'd like to know the answer, too. But this one kind of puzzled me for a while.

In 2 Samuel chapter 11, you remember that David had committed adultery with Bathsheba. She now finds herself with child. And David seeks to cover his sin and he invites Uriah, her husband, home from the battle. And he just automatically assumes that Uriah will go down and visit his wife and sleep with her and boy, he'll think it's his child and thus David's tracks are going to be covered.

Well, let's look at it. 2 Samuel 11 verse 6, "And David sent to Joab saying, 'Send me Uriah the Hittite.' And Joab sent Uriah to David. And when Uriah was coming to him, David demanded of him how Joab did and how the people did and how the war prospered." Now very obviously David could have found that information out from anyone. In fact, I can assure you there were regular runners to David on a daily basis, letting him know how the war went.

Watch verse 8, "And David said to Uriah, 'Go down to thy house and wash thy feet.' And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king. But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house." When they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down to his house, David said unto Uriah, Canst thou not from thy journey? Why then didst thou not go down unto thine house? And Uriah said unto David, The ark of Israel and of Judah abide in tents; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go into mine house to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As thou liest, and as thy soul liest, I will not do this thing.

And David said to Uriah, "Tarry here today also, and tomorrow I will let thee depart." So Uriah bade in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow when David called him he did eat and drink before him, and he made him talk. And in even he went out to lie on his bed with the service of his Lord, but he went not down to his house. Of course, you remember now David writes a letter and he tells Joab, "You sent Uriah the foremost front of the battle and withdraw from him that he may be smitten. Now why was it that Uriah went not down to his house? Why is it he wouldn't go down and visit his wife? Was he angry with her? Well of course not. And very obviously Bathsheba was a very beautiful and desirable woman. Why would he not go down there? Let me tell you why. Because of the spiritual preparations that were required for battle.

Uriah was expecting to go back to battle instantly. Look at what he said. He said in verse 11, "And Uriah said unto David, the ark and Israel and Judah abide in tents, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go into my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife as thou as thou liveth and I so liveth I will not do this thing.

Now let me just pause and show you something. Uriah was a mercenary. He was a Hittite. He was a Prasalite. And in this instance, Uriah was more godly and more holy than David was. Uriah not only had loyalty to Joab, and to the other

service. But if you will, when you get home, read Leviticus chapter 15 verses 15 through 18. You will find that there is a...unclean and thus unable to fight. And your eye said, "No, I'm not going to go down and visit my wife. I'm going to keep myself spiritually prepared so I can fight the Lord's battles. So here was spiritual preparation on the part of Uriah, and Uriah was the one who was doing that right.

Now, fourthly, let me give you another instance of spiritual preparation, and that is what I'm just simply calling vows. Turn in your Bibles, if you would, please, to the book of Numbers, chapter 21. Numbers, chapter 21. We'll look at several of these numbers chapter 21.

Beginning with verse 1 Of course, I want you to know that there is a study of vows in the Bible and I'm not going to go over all of this but vowing is a religious act and many times before a battle vows were given Numbers chapter 21 verse 1, And when King Arad the Canaanite who dwelt in the south heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies, then he fought against Israel and took some of them prisoners. And Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord and said, if thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities. And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel and delivered up the Canaanites and they utterly destroyed them in their cities and he called The name of that place Hormah.

So Israel vows a vow. They said, "Lord, if you will just give us this people, we'll kill every one of them." And the Lord heart didn't hurt. He said, "I'm gonna hold you to that." And God gave them the people, and they kept their vow, and they destroyed them all, and so the place is called Hormah, which literally means utter destruction. Look in your Bibles, if you would, please, to the book of Judges chapter 29 judges 11 verse 29 then the spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah and he passed over Gilead in Manasseh passed over miss book Gilead and.

From this book Gilead he passed over to the children of Ammon now watch verse 30 and Jephthah bow to bow unto the Lord and said if thou shalt without fail deliver the children Ammon into my hands And it shall be that whatsoever cometh forth out of the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace and from the children of Ammon shall surely be the Lord's and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.

So Jephthah passed over to the children of Ammon to fight against them and the Lord delivered them into his hands. So Jephthah is making a vow.

Now remember Israel has come to Ammon and said will you lead us in this fight against the children of Ammon. He said will you make me your captain; will you make me your leader. They said sure. Fine. He said, "I'll do that." So now he says, "God, that you will just give me victory. Whatever comes to me out of the doors of my house first, I'm going to give to you."

Now I want you to stop and think about that. That's quite a vow. All off, brothers, burnt sacrifice. Well, skip down if you would please to verse 34. "And Jephthah came to Mizpah unto his house, and behold his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances, and she was his only child. Beside her he had neither son nor daughter. And it came to pass when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter, Thou hast brought me very low, and that thou art the one of them that troubled me. For I have opened my mouth unto the

Lord, and I cannot go back. And she said unto him, my father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord to do to me according that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth, forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon.

So his only child came out. "Oh no," he said. You've brought me very low. She said just do to me whatever you said. Now, I've had people ask me, well did Jephthah sacrifice his daughter to the Lord as a burnt offering? And the answer is no. To do so would have been unscriptural. It would have been a blasphemy. But he did sacrifice her to the Lord. You say, how so? Well look in verse 37. "And she said unto her father, let this thing be done for me. Let me alone two months. That I may go up and down upon the mountains and bewail my virginity and I and my fellows. And he said go and he sent her away for two months. And she went with her companions, females, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. And it came to pass at the end of two months that she returned into her father who did with her according to his vow which he'd vowed and she knew no man. There was a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of the Gileadite four days in a year.

So she remained a perpetual virgin in his house. Well, what does that mean? It meant the end of Jephthah's line. She was an only child. So no one succeeded him in his position of leadership. I mean, when she died, that was the end of it. So here was a vow, and you'll find that many times there were vows before battles because that was part of spiritual preparation.

Turn in your Bibles if you would please to Exodus chapter 30. Let me show you another act of spiritual preparation. Let's begin with verse 11. This is known as the atonement money. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numbers them, that there be no plague among them when thou numbers them. This they shall give every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary. A shekel is twenty geeres. A half shekel shall be an offering of the Lord. Everyone that passes among them that are numbered from twenty years old and above shall give an offering unto the Lord. The rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than a half a shekel when they give an offering unto the Lord to make an atonement for your souls. And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel and thou shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord to make an atonement for your souls.

Now here is an atonement money. Note if you would please in verse 12 he said "when thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number." Let me tell you what the word number is here.

In fact I told you that the book of numbers is an entire book given to war and I proved that to you from the Bible. But let me just tell you that the word number itself The word itself literally means muster. Actually, the book of Numbers is a book of mustering the people. When you find a census in the Bible, it is not necessarily just counting heads. It is an act of war. It is an act that the military performed. But when you took the census, when you mustered the men, you always took this half shekel for the sanctuary. By the way, I hope you remember

this was the great sin of David, or at least part of his sin, when he numbered the people. He failed to take this half shekel.

Of course, it was only to be done in a time of war, except initially. So, this atonement money then was given to God and his work. It was money that was given to God in recognition of God's protection and God's provision and God's grace. The word atonement here means literally a covering or a protection. It was by means of this tax that the people placed themselves under God's sovereign authority, under God's sovereign protection, recognizing God as their one true king and paying tribute to him.

So this covering then was given as a ransom for the life of a soldier lest he should die in battle. And by the way, we'll discuss some of this later, but there were wars in the Bible where not one Israelite died. Not one. So this atonement money was taken. And of course, once again today, we do not necessarily take an atonement money if there is a war because Christ is our great atonement, but we still make We still make vow to Him and we still make gift to Him based upon the principle. We do not do it exactly like this because, like I say, Christ is the fulfillment of this. I want you to turn to the Trumpets, Numbers chapter 10. And I'm just trying to give you a number of things that went in spiritual preparation. You might call this message a potpourri of spiritual acts. for war but I'm just simply pointing out the fact that war had to be holy because there were so many spiritual preparations.

Look in the book of Numbers chapter 10 and we'll look at a number of other passages Numbers chapter 10 and let's begin reading there with verse 1 Numbers 10 verse 1. "Now the Lord spake unto Moses saying "Make thee two trumpets of silver. Of a whole piece shalt thou make them, that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps. And when they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

That they blow but with one trumpet, then the princes which are the heads of the thousands of Israel shall gather themselves unto thee. When you blow an alarm, then the camps that lie on the east shall go forward, when you blow an alarm the second time, then the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey; they shall blow an alarm for their journeys. But when the congregation is to be gathered together, you shall blow, but you shall not sound an alarm.

And the sons of Aaron the priests shall blow with the trumpets, now watch carefully, and they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations. And if you go to war in your land against an enemy that oppresses you, then you shall blow the alarm with the trumpets, and you shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and you shall be saved from your enemies. Also on the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, in the beginnings of your month, you shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings, that I may be to you for a memorial before your God. I am the Lord your God. I want you to know these trumpets were used not just during the burnt offerings, not just during the new moons, not just ordering the camp, not just calling the assemblies, but these same trumpets were used to sound before the Lord during the battle, before the

battle. In other words, God said, "When I hear the trumpets, I'll remember you." Why? It's an act of calling upon God.

Now, I want you to look at Numbers chapter 31 and verse 6. Numbers 31 and verse 6. I want you to note what the Bible says. In fact, let's read verse 5. "So they were delivered out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand of every tribe, twelve thousand, armed for war." And those that sent them to the war a thousand of every tribe them and Phineas the son of Eliezer the priest of the war with the holy instruments and the Trumpets to blow in his hand now I want you to turn right over to Psalm 47 Look at verse 5. There were a multitude of verses in fact to be absolutely honest with you I thought about bringing a whole message just on the trumpets and I I changed my mind, but trumpets are important in the Bible. Look in Psalm 47 and verse 5. Look at what scripture says. "The Lord," or God, "is going up with a shout, and the Lord with the sound of a trumpet."

Now, I want to call your attention to other passages in regard to trumpets. First of all, look in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians, chapter 14 and verse 8. 1 Corinthians 14 and verse 8. Look what the Apostle Paul says concerning the trumpet. 1 Corinthians 14 verse 8. And if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

So the trumpets were used to call people to battle and for preparation now look in your Bibles to the book of Jeremiah chapter 4 Jeremiah chapter 4 and verse 19 Jeremiah 4 verse 19 is what Jeremiah says Jeremiah 4 verse 19 Jeremiah says my bowels my bowels I am pained at my very heart. My heart makeeth a noise in me. I cannot hold my peace because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war."

Now skip down to verse 21. Watch what else he says. "How long shall I see the standard," that's the battle flag, "and hear the sound of the trumpet?" So trumpets then were sounded, number one, to call the people to arms. Number two, trumpets were sounded to sound an alarm. Thirdly, trumpets were sounded to be remembered before God in the battle. And these were the same trumpets that were used in the regular worship and the regular sacrifices. So the sound of the trumpet was an act of worship and it was also an act of asking God to remember us in the back.

Now there's one last one that I want to cover today, and that's the ark. Before I cover it, you remember I read from 1 Samuel where King Saul sounded a trumpet, or sounded an alarm. He said, "Let the Hebrews hear." What did he do? He blew a trumpet. Remember when Jephthah escaped after killing Eglon, he blew a trumpet and all Israel gathered themselves in because the trumpets were used to call the assembly or to tell people it's the time to get ready for battle, we're going to have a war.

Now let's look at the ark. The ark is a very significant instrument. It represented the divine presence of God with the army during warfare. The ark was a noble symbol of God's presence. Usually the Levites from the clan of Kohath were charged with transporting the ark from site to site during the wilderness wanderings. And this ark also was used during battles.

For instance, look in your Bibles, first of all, to the book of Numbers, chapter 3. Verse 31, Numbers 3, verse 31, just show you about the coethites. Numbers 3,



verse 31. The Bible says, "And their charge shall be the ark and the table of the candlestick and the altars and the vessels of the sanctuary wherewith they minister and the hanging and all the service thereof."

Well, if you look back in verse 30, "And the chief of the house of the father of the family to the coethites If you look in Numbers chapter 4 and verse 5, "And when the camp set it forward, Aaron shall come and his sons, and they shall take down the covering veil and cover the ark of the testimony with it."

So, the ark was a portable symbol of God's presence. Now, in 1 Samuel chapter 11 verse 11, you remember when Uzziah came back to David? You remember when he said, "Shall I go down to my house I'm not going to enjoy myself while the ark and Joab and my service are at the battle. I'm not going to do it. I'm not going to go there."

If you look in your Bibles to 1 Samuel 14, you'll see the presence that the ark had. And let's begin reading there with verse 18.

18 And Saul said unto Ahiah, Bring hither the ark of God. For the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel.

19 And it came to pass, while Saul talked unto the priest, that the noise that was in the host of the Philistines went on and increased: and Saul said unto the priest, Withdraw thine hand.

20 And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture.

21 Moreover the Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp from the country round about, even they also turned to be with the Israelites that were with Saul and Jonathan.

22 Likewise all the men of Israel which had hid themselves in mount Ephraim, when they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle.

23 So the Lord saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over unto Bethaven.

But note verse 18 And Saul said unto Ahia, Bring hither the ark of God. So the ark, which represented God's presence, was in battle. Now let me just hasten to tell you this. There was a time when the ark did not save Israel. You can read about it in 1 Samuel chapter 4. That is when Hophni and Phinehas, those two wicked priests of Eli, the sons of Eli, in the battle of Philistines, they said, "Let us send back for the Ark of the Covenant that it may save us." What were they doing? They were trusting in the Ark instead of the God of the Ark. They were using the Ark the way a lot of people use a rabbit's foot for luck. Or four leaf clover for luck. Let me tell you something folks it's not the symbols that save us with God who saves us.

Okay Now I want you to turn to two other quick passages. One of them is Numbers chapter 10. Let me show you what was said when the ark was taken up and when the ark was put down look at Numbers chapter 10 verse 35 Verse 10,

verse 35, "And it came to pass when the ark set forward that Moses said," watch now, "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate thee flee before thee." Verse 36, "And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel."

So when that ark was picked up, Moses said rise up O Lord and let thine enemies be scattered when it was set down return to the Lord Protect us now as we rest now if you look in your Bibles to Psalm 68 and hopefully I'll get to preach on this a little bit later. I want you to know in Psalm 68 how this song was a battle song notice.

Psalm 68 beginning Verse 1, "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered. Let them also that hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away. As wax melted before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad and let them rejoice before God. Yea, let them exceedingly rejoice." So let God arise, let his enemies be scattered. And this battle song came from the ark that Moses said every time that ark was picked up, let God arise, let his enemies be scattered. Now I've got one application and I want you to listen to it. And that's this. Spiritual preparation is far more important than all the physical preparation that you could ever make in war.

I heard Bill Clinton say this week with my own ears, talking about sending that force over to Zaire, he said, "And shall not the most powerful nation on the earth do what is right and help these people?" Well, that's a real assumption, isn't it, that we're the most powerful nation on the earth. And we may be militarily speaking, but that does not mean that we're the most powerful nation spiritually speaking.

All of our armaments, all of our weapons of war are useless apart from God. and his blessings. Let me just give you two scriptures, I'll quote them. The Bible says in Proverbs 21 and verse 31, "The horse is prepared for battle, but safety is of the Lord." And in the book of Psalms, David said, "A horse is a vain thing for safety, neither will he deliver any by his great strength."

You could paraphrase that a tank is a vain thing for safety neither will it deliver any by its great firepower So the truth is folks The physical preparation for war is the smallest part The greatest part is the spiritual preparation because if God be against us we'll never, ever succeed. We must make sure that we're with God and we're right with Him and doing as He wills. And then I can assure you that victory is absolutely assured. No matter the number of men, no matter the fewness of the weaponry, if God is on our side, we will win.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we pray and ask thee today to let us see that war is not just something that is physical, but, Lord, it's something that is spiritual. It's a divine act, and there must be spiritual preparations. And may our hearts be prepared to serve Thee in any way that we possibly can. May we keep our lives holy and godly so that we may worship Thee with reverence and godly fear. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

